



EMPLOYABILITY TRENDS OF ENGINEERING GRADUATES IN TAMIL NADU

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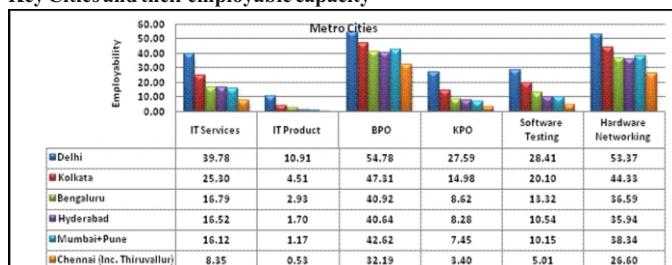
ABSTRACT

India is the largest producers of engineers in the world. Tamil Nadu is yet another largest producer among the Indian States. Engineering is considered to be the highest paying and prestigious job. But when the graduated engineers come to the job market, they are dismayed for not finding promising chances. The main reason is that they are lacking in hard skills and soft skills. Though there is a great demand for engineers, the graduated engineers cannot make themselves suitable for the jobs as they are inadequately equipped. Still, the engineering studies seem to be a popular course among the students. There are endless chances for the potential innovative engineering graduates as the demand is always on the boom. There is also a great scope for self-employment. Now many universities and education intuitions have realized the need for greater reform in the education to create skilled people. Both the central Government and state Government are moving towards creating more job opportunities for the graduates. Thus students must develop their skills and must be wise in opting for the course. They must consider their suitability and interest, and be keen on understanding the changes that occurs in the society.

Introduction

India is one of the largest producers of engineers in the world. Tamil Nadu is yet another largest producer of Engineers among Indian states and Union territories. The reason why students opt for an engineering degree is some of the lucrative and highest paying jobs are found in the Engineering field throughout the world and also it is considered to be a respectable profession in the society. The concept of outsourcing market by the developed countries is also seen as promising chances for an engineering career in the IT fields. Some of the highest paying fields are Computer Engineering, Petroleum Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Aerospace Engineering, Chemical Engineering and Material Engineering. Thus obtaining an engineering degree is a great dream of every student. But on getting their degree, on contrary to their expectation, most of the graduated engineers feel disappointed and dejected. The main reason is that they are not employable, as they are not adequately equipped to meet the demands of the job portals. As poorly equipped both in hard skills and soft skills, they are ready to take up careers which are far below their technical qualifications. Most of the graduates have taken up jobs even in BPO units, in call centres and as sales executives, where they could not find any link between their career and studies. And in the long run with disuse of whatever the engineering knowledge they gained in colleges, they tend to forget it and continue to remain under-employed or unemployed. Thus it becomes the universal cry that the quality of the engineers is quite poor. The reason that the 'supply far outnumbers the demand' cannot be seen as a viable and justifiable answer, with the unprecedented population growth and especially with the highest growth in India. As the need and the requirement of the population ever on the boom, the need for engineering manpower will also be ever on the boom to satisfy the human needs. Why then the question of unemployment or underemployment comes. One of the reasons attributed to the sharp fall in IT related job is due to "non-linear growth models of IT companies."

Key Cities and their employable capacity



(Courtesy: Aspiring minds)

South Asia which includes India continues to be the fastest growing region in the world in terms of economic development. Though there was the slightest decline in 2016, according to the World Bank report titled "Globalization Backlash", India's economic growth will raise from the current 6.8% fiscal to 7.2% in the 2017-2018 financial years. The Economy of the world today is a 'knowledge-based economy.' But in the words of Raghbendra Jha: India's economic growth is the "jobless economic growth."

India's current population is 1.34 billion. And the population of Tamil Nadu is 67.86 million in 2017. Based on the International labour organisation report The Hindu Daily dated January 13, 2017 the article entitled: "More people to be jobless in India: ILO," states that "the number of jobless will increase from 17.7 million in 2016 to 18 million by 2018 even though the country's unemployment rate is expected to go down from 3.5 per cent to 3.4 per cent in 2017." And "the number of workers earning less than \$3.10 per day is even expected to increase by more than 5 million over the next two years in developing countries," which includes India. The Daily Times of India dated April 16, 2017, reports that "Tamil Nadu has 81.30 lakh people waiting for government employment as on March 31." Tamil Nadu has a massive number of engineering colleges and continues to produce a great number of engineers every year. As per the "Aspiring Minds" report in 2016, the number of engineering institutes in Tamil Nadu was 955 out of 7080 Engineering Colleges spread over the 27 States and Union territory, which is the highest number, among the 27 states and Union Territory. But in the current scenario in Tamil Nadu for the current academic year 2016-2017, AICTE has approved 527 UG college with 279397 seats and 398 P.G colleges with 34475 seats. But the engineering graduates are not on the top employability list. In the employability rank, Tamil Nadu stands only on the 5th place and Andhra Pradesh on the 4th.

Ambika Choudhary Mahajan in the article "1.5 Million Engineering Pass Outs In India Every Year, Fewer Getting Hired [Trends]" dated Oct 28th 2014 states : "The fact, however, remains that 20-33% out of the 1.5 million engineering graduates

passing out every year run the risk of not getting a job at all.... for those who do, the entry-level salary is pathetically low, and has stagnated at that level for the last eight-nine years, though the prices of everything from groceries to vehicle fuel have shot up during the same period."

In August 2nd, 2016 CoreEL Technologies in the articles "Changing the face of Engineering Education in India" opines: "out of 6 lakh B.Tech graduates may be 15-20 percent are actually employable by engineering firms"

Based on the "National Employability Report of 2016 by Aspiring Minds, India Today reports: "A New Delhi-based employment solutions company, Aspiring Minds, conducted an employability-focused study based on 150,000 engineering students and found barely 7 per cent suitable for core engineering jobs." The Aspiring Minds report also adds that there is "No significant improvement in employability in the last four years." E.Sreedharan, 'metroman', a Padma Vibhushan awardee regretted in the Economic Times dated 01/09/2016, that "engineering institutes in the country are producing engineers of very sub-quality" And he concluded that "only 29 percent engineers are employable, while 30 per cent can be made employable after further studies and the remaining 48 percent are simply not employable. Decan Chronicle, dated Jan 10, 2016, stated that one lakh government quota engineering seats would go vacant.

India Skill report 2016 states: "Currently with one of the highest youth population in the world, India faces its greatest opportunity as well as a challenge. It is slated to become the world's youngest nation by 2022. Whereas the population bulge provides for a huge reservoir of manpower, it also draws unprecedented focus towards making this talent pool employable- so that they can contribute towards a developed India." Vivek Wadhwa et.al in their article "Where the engineers are" speaks about engineering education in India in the following words; 'To guide education policy and maintain its innovation leadership, the United States must acquire an accurate understanding of the quantity and quality of engineering graduates in India and China.' Though the suggestion came from them in 2007, there has not been any significant changes have been made still.

To break all these myths about engineering education and its perspectives in India, "last year, over 13 Lac students appeared for JEE Mains entrance examination which makes the exam one of the largest entrance exams across the world. These numbers indicate that engineering courses have been and will be one of the most popular undergraduate courses in India in the years to come", says HTC camp in the article entitled; "Which Are the Best Engineering Courses in India?". In 2017 10.2 lakh students have appeared for JEE examination.

In The Hindu Daily", Dr. Anand Samuel in his article "Education plus: Engineering a future?", felt that the 'negativism' about the engineering studies 'crippled' engineering education in India. He adds that one should consider the need for engineers for the world. He further states that the need is plenty for the talented and potential engineers and he adds that there is great scope for self-employment for those who are innovative and energetic.

The courses in great demand in India are software engineering. The growing economy and the need for infrastructural development require a large number of engineers and civil engineers. The expansion of industries requires large number mechanical engineers. The development in ICT and communication requires a huge number of computer engineers and electronic engineers. Automobile engineers are very much needed for various modes of automobiles for transportation. The need for Aeronautical engineering is necessitated by movement of people to different parts of the country for various reasons. The job opportunities available in Good producing sectors are Mining, Construction and Manufacturing. Job opportunities in the Service-providing sectors are Utilities, Wholesale Trade, Retail sale, Transportation and Warehousing, Information, Financial Activities, Professional and services, Education services: private, Healthcare and social assistance, Leisure and Hospitality. Other services are; Federal Government, State and local Government, Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, Agriculture wage and salary, Agricultural self- employed workers, Non-agricultural self- employed workers etc.

Conclusion

Now many universities and education intuitions have realized the need for greater reform in the education to create skilled people etc thus launched "make in India", 'star up India, "small cities" and "Digital India" schemes and programmes.

"Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in his budget has reiterated the government's commitment to job creation and identified several sectors - textiles, leather, tourism, transportation and affordable housing - that he said will open up employment opportunity."

One's percentage of marks is not the true indicator of one's skill, engineering graduates instead of just getting marks by memorizing the content must try to develop their skills. They must be ready to find self- employment and avoid depending on the campus interview selection and the Employment Exchanges or the government. Thus students must develop their skills and must be wise in opting for the course. They must consider their suitability and interest, and be keen on understanding the changes that occurs in the society.

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